



Tapu!tea

...ina ia manino le folauga.

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OFFICIAL AMERICAN SAMOA GOVERNMENT WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

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Governor Togiola meets with FINTEL concerning Trans-Pacific fiber optic cable link

Governor Togiola Tulafono arrived in Suva, Fiji, on Monday, April 3, 2006, for talks with officials of FINTEL (Fiji International Telecommunications Ltd) to discuss possibility of American Samoa connecting to the Southern Cross Cable, the underwater, 19,000 mile - Trans-Pacific fiber optic cable that links Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Hawaii and California, which is considered the "emerging heart of the Internet."

From Fiji, Governor Togiola said the meeting will include a tour of the cable landing site -Fiji station, one of nine stations in the Southern Cross Cable network- and the optic fiber terminal of FINTEL.

"We're approaching this undertaking very aggressively and touring the facilities here in Suva is one of the things that we must do, should we end up making the connection at the terminal here," said Governor Togiola.

"We need to discuss the possibility that FINTEL may be contracted to maintain our cable for us. I am very optimistic and look forward to very productive meetings."

Governor Togiola said American Samoa needs access to the Southern Cross cable because it is a crucial link to the worldwide web, multi-media communication, e-commerce and much more and that the impact of our link to the cable will be far-reaching because it will greatly assist off island investors in deciding to invest in the Territory.

"It will definitely widen our relationship with the rest of the world and how we run and conduct our businesses because the direct cable routing will enhance even further both the reliability and performance of our internet provider service by reducing delays in the routings," said Governor Togiola. "Businesses all count on high quality and affordable telecommunication services and this will be a big plus for us when we can provide it this way to off island investors."

While in Fiji, Governor Togiola also visited the inaugural China-Pacific Island Countries Development Cooperation Forum which took place Wednesday, April 5th & April 6th.

The purpose of the Forum is to promote economic and trade cooperation between China and Pacific Island Countries for mutual development.

The Forum was co-hosted by the Ministry of Commerce of China, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade of Fiji and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

"American Samoa needs access to the Southern Cross cable because it is a crucial link to the worldwide web, multi-media communication, e-commerce and much more..."

UMR History Club to help students in American Samoa

The History Club at the University of Missouri-Rolla is raising funds to send books and supplies to schools in American Samoa that were damaged by two cyclones in February. Students in the club will sell books and baked goods to raise the money.

The book and baked-goods sales will be held from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Thursday, March 10, and Friday, March 11, on the first floor of the Humanities-Social Sciences Building on the UMR campus.

In February, the American territory was hit first by Cyclone Olaf, then by Cyclone Percy. Damage reports estimate 99 percent of the homes on the island T'au were destroyed. Students in the UMR History Club chose the plight of Samoan school children as their service project.

"We wanted to relieve some of the stress caused by the cyclones' destruction," says Rebecca Rose, a junior in history from Linn, Mo. "By giving books and school supplies to the elementary schools, we hope to shift the children's focus away from the devastation."

Dr. Diana Ahmad, assistant professor of history and UMR archivist, is serving as the club's liaison to American Samoa.

HISTORICAL NOTES

By: Stan Sorensen, Historian, Office of the Governor

On April 8, 1901, Commander Benjamin Franklin Tilley, Commandant, U.S. Naval Station Tutuila, enacted his "Regulation No. 2-1901: Provisional Regulation Concerning Titles to Land."

On April 8, 1937, Pan American Airways' *Samoa Clipper* left Pago Pago for Honolulu on the last leg of her return flight from Auckland.

On April 8, 1944, USS *Tutuila* (ARG-4; the second U.S. naval vessel to be named *Tutuila*), an internal combustion engine repair ship which had been converted from the liberty ship USS *Arthur P. Gorman*, was commissioned at Baltimore, Maryland. She was built by the Bethlehem Steel Company; her first skipper was Commander George T. Boldizsar.

On April 8, 1946, The second USS *Tutuila* (ARG-4) weighed anchor at Shanghai, China, "transited the Panama Canal and arrived at New Orleans on 20 May."

On April 8, 1963, Tupua Tamasese Peter Mea'ole, Joint Head of State with Malietoa Tanumafili II since Western Samoa's independence on January 1, 1962, died of lung cancer in Western Samoa.

On April 10, 1919, the German silver money which was shipped to the DHPG's (*Deutsche Handels und Plantagens Gesellschaft* [German Commercial Agricultural Company's]) Pago Pago office on board the *Staatssekretär Solf* (State-Secretary Solf) on August 5, 1914 was discovered buried in the rear of the building formerly owned by the DHPG by the Sheriff of American Samoa, Lieutenant Commander L.W. Strum, USN. Most of the money, which was wrapped in canvas bags, and then enclosed in terra cotta drainpipes cemented together to form a triangle, was missing. The remaining coins were shipped to the Navy's Alien Property Custodian in Washington, D.C.

On April 10, 1934, Lieutenant Commander Thomas Calloway Latimore relieved Captain George Bertram Landenberger and became American Samoa's 22nd naval governor (acting: until April 17, 1934).

On April 11, 1877, French Marist Bishop Pierre Bataillon, Vicar Apostolic of Central Oceania and the Navigators passed away, and was succeeded by Bishop Louis Elloy.

On April 11, 1890, Robert Louis Stevenson and his party left Apia for Auckland and Sydney "aboard the black, grimy unstable six-hundred ton *Janet Nicholl*."

On April 11, 1904, the "first public school, Fagatogo" was opened in American Samoa, "with two teachers and 40 pupils, between the ages of 6 and 12. Mrs. Trevorrow, wife of Warrant Machinist Trevorrow, was the principal. The natives showed prejudice against a woman teacher for boys."

On April 11, 1941, in American Samoa, the measles quarantine, which began a month before, was lifted, thus enabling the Marine Corps' 7th Defense Battalion to move from its holding area at the Naval Station to Camp Samuel Nicholas in Faga'alu.

On April 11, 1944, all of Tutuila's Naval Station stores were reported as having soda fountain facilities.

On April 11, 1915, Gustav Frederick Dertlag "Gus" Betham, also known as Fereti Misipita, was born in Western Samoa. Mr. Betham had a long and distinguished public career, which included membership on the Legislative Council (1948) and the Legislative Assembly (1949-1971). He served as Minister of Finance from 1961 to 1969, Secretary-General of the South Pacific Commission (1971-1975), and later as Western Samoa's High Commissioner to New Zealand. He was also a golf and tennis champion.

On April 12, 1900, Tuimanu'a Elisara told Governor Benjamin F. Tilley (who was visiting Manu'a) that he would "join the new government."

On April 12, 1900, Governor Benjamin F. Tilley advised Tuimanu'a Elisara that he would be "under the authority of the United States", even if he did not come to the flag raising ceremonies on April 17th.

On April 12, 1942, the doctors and corpsmen of the U.S. Navy's Mobile Hospital No. 3 ("MOB 3") departed San Diego for Tutuila.

ASCC Marine Science Students Make Educational Expedition to Swains Island

Last week, five Marine Biology students from the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), along with Dr. Carolyn Braun, Marine Science Program Director, boarded the M/V Sili last week to take the journey to Swains Island. Dr. Braun and her students would spend two days and nights on the remote island. "We planned the trip as an opportunity to do some serious research, which we accomplished," she explained, "but thanks to the incredible hospitality of the people living on Swains, the trip ended up involving a lot of fun as well."

Caretakers on Swains greeted Dr. Braun and the students and Swains Island Representative Alex Jennings and Swains native Wally Jennings gave the ASCC visitors a walking tour of the island and told them about its history. "Swains Island is a smaller version of what Tutuila must have looked like ages ago," says Braun. "It has a huge lagoon in the middle, and its highest peak is only a few feet high, but it's an island that should be preserved and cherished." The Jennings also explained that the handful of residents on Swains live a subsistence lifestyle. They fish for what they eat, drink niu, and maintain a farm (with pigs and chickens) and a plantation. No children live on the island, and the only regular visitors are the crew of the M/V Sili, when they make the trip every three to five months to bring supplies. The National Ocean and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) also maintains a weather station on Swains. If the description "subsistence lifestyle" sounds like a meager existence, the ASCC visitors soon found this was anything but the case when their tour was followed by what Braun describes as "an amazing feast of fresh lobster, fish and pig." Marine Science major Jeff Speicher commented that, "It was like a trip back in time. This must have been what it was like living here 250 years ago." Stephen Kostelnik, another marine science major agreed, "It felt like we had traveled back in time to visit an island in its pristine state."

The next day was packed full of water quality testing, fish surveys, an aquaculture assessment, and an inter-tidal coastal assessment, which took about two and a half hours to complete by circumnavigating the island. That evening, the students were taught how to hunt for lobster using their feet, and how to catch fish without the luxuries of today's high tech fishing gear.

After two days of research activities, with the M/V Sili ready to return to Tutuila, the ASCC visitors bid a fond farewell to Swains, having enjoyed a rare visit which left a lasting impression on them. Student Clarinette Eves marveled, "It was a lifetime experience that taught me the values of life and culture, and an educational adventure." Tautai Langkilde echoed these sentiments, reflecting that, "The natural, pristine, untouched beauty of Swains captivated me, and revived in me a place of paradise I thought only existed in my imagination." Dr. Braun feels that more research and other academic should take place on Swains because, "It gives the students a glimpse into what it would be like if we had to go back to living a subsistent life, without all the westernization we take for granted. Visiting here is a great opportunity to 'become one' with your environment."

Dr. Braun and her students are grateful to Captain Wally Thompson and the crew of the M/V Sili, Representative Alex Jennings, Wally Jennings of USDA, Ms. K., and the men living on Swains Island for the opportunity to experience this unique environment. They also wish to thank their family and friends, who prayed for their safe journey and safe return.



ASCC Marine Biology Students test the water quality in the Swains Island lagoon. (l-r) Clarinette Eves, Tautai Landkilde, Reggie Penitusi, Stephen Kostelnik and Jeff Speicher. (Photo: ASCC)



ASCC Marine Biology Students travel to Swains Island on the M/V Sili. (l-r) Tautai Landkilde, Reggie Penitusi, Clarinette Eves, Stephen Kostelnik and Jeff Speicher (Sitting). (Photo: ASCC)

The Feleti Barstow Public Library invites you to “Change your world @ your library®”

Utulei – The Honorable Governor, Togiola T.A. Tulafono has proclaimed April 3-8, 2006 as National Library Week, a time to celebrate the contributions of libraries, librarians and library workers to their schools, campuses and communities.

“National Library Week is the perfect time to come in and see how we can help you change your world,” says Cheryl Morales-Polataivao, Territorial Librarian. “Whether you’re looking to make a small change in your life or a big change in the world, the Feleti Barstow Public Library has the books and magazines, databases and free Internet access that can help you get it done.”

As part of this annual event, the Feleti Barstow Public Library is offering an Amnesty Week. “All throughout National Library Week we will forgive all fines for overdue books turned in during National Library Week” added Abe King, Public Services Coordinator for the public library. “We want to make all our books available to everyone, and when people don’t turn in their books, others can’t enjoy them.”

A presentation of donated books and supplies to the Fitiuta Elementary School has also been slate for National Library Week. “This generous donation was from a college history club at the University of Missouri-Rolla,” explained King. “This club, 6,000 miles away, read about the devastation Manu’a incurred from Hurricane Olaf last year and wanted to help.”

National Library Week 2006 marks the sixth year of The Campaign for America’s Libraries, a multi-year public education campaign sponsored by the ALA and libraries across the country to speak loudly and clearly about the value of libraries and librarians in the 21st century. More than 20,000 libraries in all 50 states and territories are being reached by @ your library®, The Campaign for America’s Libraries.

For more information about National Library Week, visit the Feleti Barstow Public Library in Utulei or call 633-5816.

Governor Togiola appoints Dr. Lalo’ulu Tagoilelagi Commissioner of Insurance

Pursuant to the Revised Constitution of American Samoa, Article IV, Section 7, and the American Samoa Code Annotated, Sections 4.0111 and 29.0201, I hereby appoint Dr. Lalo’ulu Tagoilelagi as Commissioner of Insurance, filling that position which is currently vacant.

Dr. Tagoilelagi brings with him the experience necessary to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Office as mandated by law, as well as the attitude and willingness to work closely with those in the insurance industry.

I have complete faith and confidence in the abilities of Dr. Tagoilelagi and urge all of you to extend to him your usual cooperation and support.

Governor Togiola signs Veterans Memorial \$500K appropriation bill

(UTULEI) – Governor Togiola Tulafono today approved Senate Bill 29-65, the Veterans Memorial bill, which appropriates \$500,000 from unobligated and unbudgeted revenue of fiscal year 2006 to fund the construction of a memorial commemorating American Samoa’s veterans and their sacrifices in defense of their country and territory.

Governor Togiola said in considering the sacrifices of the people of American Samoa in protecting the United States and its territories, he believes that this act is entirely appropriate.

“From the beginning of this Territory’s relationship with the United States of America, Samoans have courageously shouldered their burden of defending the U.S. and American Samoa, without hesitation,” said Governor Togiola. “This commitment to duty, honor and country is deserving of recognition. This act goes a long way toward providing that acknowledgment and appreciation.”

The Territory’s retired military personnel plan to build a Veterans Memorial tentatively slated for construction in Vaitogi.

Dr. Lui Tuitele to Head PREL Board

Malaetele Dr. Lui Tuitele, the Director of Education of the American Samoa Department of Education, has taken over as Chair of the Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL) Board of Directors. He replaces Dr. Rita Hocog Inos, Commissioner of Education of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands Public School System, who has announced her retirement. He has also been selected to chair the Advisory Committee for the Pacific Comprehensive Center.

PREL’s Board consists of the Chief State School Officers of the 10 jurisdictions in the region it serves (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawai’i, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau) and 10 constituent members. Other officers of PREL’s Board are: Vice Chair Surangel Whipps, Jr., President & CEO of Surangel & Sons, Co., Republic of Palau; Treasurer Zita Pangelinan, President & CEO of Pacific Human Resource Services, Inc., Guam; and Secretary Larry Vogel, President & CEO of Y. Hata & Co. Ltd., Hawai’i.

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Governor Togiola addresses Retirement Fund concerns raised by Senate President Lolo Moliga

Governor Togiola took time to address media inquiries of concerns raised by Senate President Lolo M. Moliga regarding the American Samoa Government Employees Retirement Fund.

The following are the concerns from the Senate President and the official response from Governor Togiola:

Senate President: "If the Board of Directors for the Retirement Fund is not going to shoulder the responsibility of verifying the educational credentials of the person in question, then it is our request that the Attorney General conduct the appropriate investigation that is required by our Personnel Policies and Procedures".

GOVERNOR TOGIOLA: *We also have concerns and we are looking into the matter. We are not sure we have any authority under the law to intervene. The American Samoa Government Employees Retirement Fund (ASGERF) is a semi-autonomous agency and hiring employees is the legal prerogative of the Board. I will advise everyone when we decide what we are going to do within the bounds of the law.*

Senate President: "On a separate issue, we would like to direct your attention to the current membership of the Retirement Board. While Mr. Brant Judy has been an excellent member of the Retirement Fund, it is our recommendation that a replacement be appointed comprised of an individual who resides permanently in American Samoa."

GOVERNOR TOGIOLA: *Mr. Brant Judy has been an excellent member of the Board and I really do not know of any reason to remove him from the Board. He does not run the fund, so he does not have to be in American Samoa all the time. He can certainly perform his responsibilities as a Board Member when he attends meetings. I see nothing wrong with continuing his membership on the Board.*

Senate President: "Moreover, it is our contention that it is operationally inappropriate for the Lieutenant Governor to hold membership on the Board of Directors of the ASGERF. The Lieutenant Governor is the second highest ranking official in the Executive Branch thus it carries with it substantial influence that sometimes negate open discussion of issues affecting the ASGERF. Moreover, in the event problems occur it would be difficult to candidly address identified deficiencies because of the involvement of the Lieutenant Governor."

GOVERNOR TOGIOLA: *I don't know why "it would be difficult to candidly address identified deficiencies because of the involvement of the Lieutenant Governor" on the Board. There has been no such "identified deficiencies" and I don't know why the Lieutenant Governor's presence on the Board would interfere with any action that is needed to challenge any action by the Board. I believe the members of the Board have exercised great integrity and honesty in their work as Board Members. I have not been shown any legitimate reason to remove him from the Board. After all, he is an employee of the government, and the goal is to look after your own fund to make sure that when your employees retire, there is money in the fund. There is a lot of money in the fund and that is the ultimate evidence of whether or not the Board is doing its job.*

Senate President: "Further, due to the intrinsic involvement of the American Samoa TeleCommunications Authority in debt service obligations of the American Samoa Government, the perception of conflict of interest for the Chief Executive Officer being the chairman of the Retirement Fund Board is apparent. These perceived conflict of interests cast suspicion on the management of the Retirement Fund."

GOVERNOR TOGIOLA: *"Perceived conflict of interest" is an interesting thing. There are no dealings between the Retirement Fund and ASTCA. When money is needed to pay certain obligations of the government from the Retirement Fund, we ask the Fono for legislation. Before we propose legislation and the Fono approves, we must get an actuarial review of how the proposal may affect the fund. If the experts say it is safe to go, we go. If they say no, we don't go. What does "perceived conflict of interest" have to do with this? It's funny. When the Senate passes laws authorizing the use of Retirement Fund proceeds to secure or pay government obligations, no finding of "perceived conflict of interest" is ever propounded.*

Senate President: "The Senate is therefore very concerned that externally induced complications with respect to administrative and board leadership might exacerbate the health of the retirement fund. It is our hope that you will seriously address the issues herein raised."

GOVERNOR TOGIOLA: *The statement is too convoluted to try and decipher. But, if it is trying to say that there is something wrong with the Retirement Fund Board, my answer is simply: They are wrong.*

ASCC Nursing Students Provide Instruction for Fatuoaga Staff

By James Kneubuhl, ASCC Press Officer

For students in the Nursing Department at the American Samoa Community College (ASCC), the curriculum combines classroom instruction with a wide range of hands-on, practical activities at the LBJ Hospital and in the community. As part of the Nursing Department's ongoing commitment to community service, its Practical Nursing (PN) students provided a series of lectures to Nursing Staff at Fatuoaga this week. These short lectures by the ASCC Nursing students focused on areas relevant to the Fatuoaga staff's care for elderly residents and disabled children, including topics such as range-of-motion, positioning, vital signs, and clinical practice.

"The teaching activity at Fatuoaga will help our students develop leadership and organizational skills," explained Nursing Department chairperson Lele Ah Mu Mageo. "Our students have planned and prepared not only their oral presentations, but also posters and handouts on the health skills they will be lecturing on. Besides the benefits to our students, of course we also want to collaborate with Fatuoaga to help them improve their level of care." Nursing students evaluated their own teaching through questions and activities, and they also requested that the Fatuoaga staff fill out evaluation forms after class. In the final step of the academic process, each Nursing student will write a Reflection Paper describing what they have learned from the teaching activity, and the effect of community service on their own career. The teaching activities at Fatuoaga took place this Tuesday and Wednesday, with Thursday set aside as a day of review.